

## **ART Quality Assurance**

April 7 & 8, 1999

---

**In attendance /Westside April 7:** Dr. Barry Glick; Mike Canfield, Kitsap; Nels Nelson and Elizabeth Jobson, Clark; Hulet Gates, King; Jennifer Brewer, Skamania; Anita McIntosh, Mason; John Deremiah, Island; Ross Austin, Lewis; Jim Singleton; Jefferson; Mary Reed, Pierce; Craig Bracey, Cowlitz; Chris Hayes, ART QA/Snohomish; Doug Kopp, JRA Olympia

**In Attendance/Eastside April 8:** Dr. Barry Glick; Andrew Gelstin, Okanogan; Grant Dotts, Stevens/Ferry/Pend Oreille; Kelly VanBuren, Asotin/Garfield; Windy Tevlin and Kim Chavez, Whitman; Stacey Cadden and Robyn Berndt, Yakima; Kevin Griffith, Spokane; Ellen Schwannecke, Kittitas; Jack Murphy, Douglas; Tina Cochran, Chelan; Juan Garza, Adams; Rick Bomar, Grant; Chris Hayes, ART QA/Snohomish; Doug Kopp, JRA Olympia

### **1. Status of Programs**

All counties have started groups. Progress varies from being in week one with the first group to having finished the intervention and the graduation ceremony. A few of the counties have their second group ready to begin.

### **2. Attendance/Attrition**

Attendance/Attrition varied widely by County. Dr Glick commented that 15 to 20% attrition is not unusual for start-ups of community based programs. Doug Kopp calculated the attrition rate for Washington ART at 34%.  
[See attached graphs.]

ART is a group process. When group size is below six (6) the process is compromised. If group size becomes too small then groups should be combined if there are more than one group operating.

Attendance increases when the relevance and usefulness of ART is constantly reinforced for the trainees. In addition attendance increases when a rich incentive program is implemented.

It is important that attendance is emphasized during engagement and throughout the whole of ART. If a trainee misses it is essential that a trainer contacts the trainee as soon as possible to re-establish attendance, highlight the trainees importance, and re-emphasize the relevance of the program to the trainee.

### **3. Homework**

Homework is an integral part of ART. If homework is not done the principles of over-learning and repetition are violated. Homework must be done before a class can be held. Perhaps we can use additional resources such as tutors, mentors, older siblings, teachers, or parents to ensure that the homework is done.

Expectations regarding homework drive compliance. The first time homework does not show up the trainer should make a big deal out of it.

An approach being used by a couple of counties is to have the trainee fill out the top part of their homework before leaving class as called for in the intervention. Then if the trainee does not bring the homework sheet back for the next class the trainers has the trainee sit down and fill out the whole sheet again doing both the top and bottom. This creates more over learning for those who do not bring back their homework sheets. It also gets the trainee ready to start class since the first task in class is to review both what was learned last week and trainee experiences when implementing the new skill. This practice does not reinforce timely self-evaluation by the youth.

It is essential that the trainees practice their skills and write their experiences up for homework.

### **4. Incentives**

Incentives are an essential part of ART. Courts that have high attendance and low attrition have established good incentive programs.

Random reinforcers are more powerful than fixed ratio reinforcers. Youth who received a soda after each session if they reached their goal soon saw the soda as a right and not an incentive.

Verbal praise is extremely powerful. Verbal praise should be provided by the trainers and the probation officer (if different). Praise should be provided while the intervention is in progress and outside the intervention in a one on one situation. One county praised a trainee before the judge in the courtroom.

[For a more exhaustive discussion see Quality Assurance notes from March 1999]

### **5. Program Design**

ART is a 10 week program design. It is intended to run consecutively for increased impact. One county is running the program with 3 weeks of program and then a one week break. This is a different model. There is no research to show the impact of this pattern.

When a trainer experiences an unexpected situation (e.g. a problem situation stirs a strong emotional response in a trainee because of a life experience) he/she should rely on the structure of ART to keep the class going. Trainer safety lies in the structure of the intervention.

## **6. Role of Co-trainer**

The co-trainer can do anything that will enhance the group. The co-trainer may participate in the model and/or then provide behavioral monitoring and control. The co-trainer may also be the co-actor in the role plays. It is better if trainees are the co-actors because this provides them the opportunity to gain confidence in and experience with the intervention.

## **7. Week 10 – Structured Learning**

The skill “Dealing with Failure” was chosen for week ten for two reasons. First, this skill prepares the graduate to deal with their community and their own life with both successes and failures. Second, this is a very sophisticated skill so it is taught last.

## **8. Anger Control Training**

Weeks 6 and 7 were discussed in our Eastside meeting. “Thinking Ahead” is the 4<sup>th</sup> *Anger Reducer*. “Thinking Ahead” is the anger reducer the begins to increase a trainees power in future situations.

In Week 7 we again offer the trainee more personal power. Dr. Glick commented that we want them to think -- “If I can control my own behavior I become more powerful. I have learned cues, reducers, reminders and thinking ahead. Now if I learn what I do that makes other people angry I can then learn to control those behaviors. If others don’t get mad at me I won’t get angry back. Then, maybe, I will be in the position that I will never get so angry again that I do something impulsive.”

Week 7 sets the stage for Weeks 8, 9, and 10 when we practice, practice, practice adding social skills.

## **9. Moral Reasoning**

The Problem Situations are written so that they are gender neutral. One can simply change the names in order to change the gender. Also institutional situations can be changed to be detention or school situations.

Moral reasoning requires the trainer to work with two variables the first of which is the level of moral maturity of the reasons given by the trainees. The second variable is which thinking error (self-centered, minimizing/mislabeling, assuming the worst, and blaming others) the trainee is using. Thinking errors are useful in matching individuals in discussions. Discussion can be generated even among Level 1 trainees when thinking errors are explored.

It is important to establish moral maturity before engaging in debate. When most or all trainees answer at Level 1 it is possible to ask youth to say why they think another trainee might think something else. The trainer could also ask a trainee to discuss as if they thought something else. These techniques can encourage highly important perspective taking while establishing mature moral reasoning. Finally, the co-facilitator can be used to support more mature moral reasoning. However it is better if the trainer can establish a more mature moral position using the trainees.

## **10. Behavioral Management**

To reduce behavior management issues the trainer trains the trainees about their roles in the group. Begin this training immediately with the first group and shape behavior over time. Keep trainees on task.

An up front discussion with the whole group about distractibility and interventions is helpful with younger trainees. This avoids the pitfalls of embarrassing, singling out, power struggling, and surprising.

Chapter 6 of the ART book contains very important information about behavior management. It also addresses individual differences in various kinds of kids. Trainers should carefully review this chapter frequently.

## **11. Successes**

Trainees are showing success in the community. One county reported that one of their trainees who had been unable to remain in school for a whole day now attends and remains in school daily. Another county reported that persons in a neighboring state wanted to know what they were doing with their trainees since there was such a marked behavioral improvement. A third county reported that they were receiving positive comments from community members about improved behavior in their trainees. Transfer of training seems to be taking place.

Some trainees seem to have the most difficulty using their new skills within their own families. An example of a girl who uses her new skills at home and has great difficulty with her step-mother who lacks skills was given.

## **12. Excluding Trainees from Group**

All possible techniques to engage and motivate a youth should be employed before any consideration is given to excluding a youth for disruptive behavior. If inspite of every effort if a youth is so disruptive that they are destroying the group then it is appropriate to exclude them from the group.